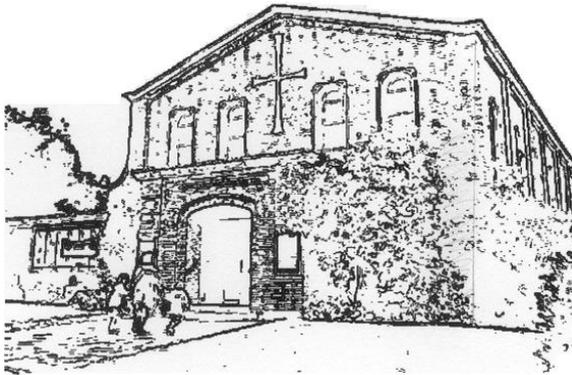




FOCUS



ISSUE NUMBER 117

Christmas 2015

Message from the Church secretary

Dear Friends

I am sitting at my desk, flicking between writing this letter and preparing the devotions for the final meeting of the St. Albans Area committee of Thames North Synod, before the structure changes and we move to a new system of Synod wide committees and Local Area Groups. The Moderators aim is to release people back into their local churches to work at grass roots level and not to be tied up in meetings. 1 Corinthians 12: 12 is the body made up of many parts, and verse 28 in the NIV specifically mentions the gift of administration!

The South Herts Group of Churches is already well established, and will become more important as we work together sharing resources and vision as to how we can best serve our communities. Initially, church life without a minister, has been a challenge and will continue to be, but many churches have no prospect of a minister, or only a very small portion. We are blessed with a number of gifted speakers and worship leaders.

I expect that the vacancy will be declared before the end of the year, or very early in 2016. We are in the process of setting up a vacancy committee with representatives from St. Georges and Christ Church to oversee the practicalities of the joint pastorate and the selection and presentation of any suitable candidates to the two congregations for consideration of calling as our minister. The churches will be fully involved in the final decision, and I will update you regularly, but with the national lack of ministers/candidates it may be a prolonged vacancy.

The paperwork has been signed and should see the manse occupied by DENS soon.

The atrocities in Paris continue to dominate the news as I write this, my brother Peter drove past the Stade de France on that Friday on his way to the airport to come and see us. His company is based in Paris and they have over 600 employees there. Our thoughts and prayers must go to all those affected by these abominations. Many people say faith has a lot to answer for, and it does, but it also has a lot of answers. 1 Corinthians 13:13 "And now these three remain. Faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

Just above my computer screen, I have a quote by Bill Bradley, which says. "Respect your fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about one another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another achieve it. No destructive lies, no ridiculous fears. No debilitating anger."

Jeremy

Message from the editors

Dear Church Family,

We (Jessica and Paul) took over focus magazine from Judy Watson after the previous edition was published in August. Both of us are Sixth Form students studying for our A Levels and so are slightly time restricted. As a result we have reduced the number of Focus Magazine Editions down to three per year; Easter, Summer and Christmas. Hopefully this will mean that the quality of each edition remains at a high standard, and includes plenty of relevant content.

This issue is hopefully not dissimilar to issues produced by Judy in the past, as our main goal was to teach ourselves a thing or two about magazine editing and work out technicalities such as deadlines and formats. In future issues a few minor changes might occur; such as the design of the cover and the number of regular contributors (we hope to reach out to more of the congregation to ensure that everybody who is wanting to have their voice heard has a chance).

Judy has done a wonderful job over the years, and we realise now how hard it is to follow in her footsteps. Apologies for the delay in the publishing of this issue- it has been a challenge to continue Focus at a similar level of quality!

We hope you enjoy the issue, and if you have any ideas for our Easter edition we would really love to hear them!

Paul and Jess

WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

Mondays	<p><u>Home Group</u>: - 8.00 p.m. Leaders: Linda & Kevin York</p> <p><u>Home Group</u> –Leaders Amanda and Dan Hobbs Weekly, 2 Redbourne Road.</p>
Tuesdays	<p><u>Home Group</u> – Weekly in term time; 11.30 a.m. – 12.45 p.m. in the Bell Lounge. Leader: Gill Griffin</p> <p><u>Home Group</u> – 1st/3rd week of each month at 7.45 p.m. at Peter & Jo Taylor’s home. Leader: Tracy Malan.</p>
Wednesdays	<p><u>Wednesday Welcome</u> – 10.30 a.m. in Church Hall in term time. Coffee/Tea served at 10.15 a.m.</p> <p><u>Prayer Fellowship</u>: - 2nd/4th Wednesday of each month from 7.00 – 8.00 p.m. in the Bell Lounge</p> <p><u>Home Group</u> – 1st/3rd week of each month at 8.00 p.m. Leader: Richard Waymark</p>
Thursdays	<p><u>Toddlers’ Group</u> - 10.00 – 11.45 a.m</p> <p><u>Pilots</u>:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Deckhands – 5.30 – 6.30 p.m. Adventurers – 5.45 – 7.00 p.m. Voyagers – 7.00 – 8.15 p.m. Cell Groups. (Navigators) 8.30 – 9.30 p.m.</p>
Fridays	<p>Youth Chill Zone 4 – 6.00 p.m.</p>
Saturdays	<p><u>Table Tennis</u> - 9-11.00 a.m. – Church hall, Leader Dennis Chang and Gill Griffin</p>

Music Group Practice – TBC weekly by Worship Leader

St Georges Church Christmas Services 2015

6th Dec – 10.30am

Family Christingle – a delightful service where little ones (and older one's too) can join together to make a traditional Christingle and then light it during the Christingle service.

13th Dec – 10.30am

Nativity, Family Service – a modern twist on the traditional nativity, a service full of surprises that may make you chuckle!

20th December – 10.30am

9 Lessons and Carols – Our favourite carols and traditional readings.

24th Dec - 6pm

Family Candlelit Service, a mainly traditional service to appeal to the whole family.

24th Dec – 11.30pm

Midnight service, a fairly short service with a traditional feel to welcome Christmas morning together.

25th Dec – 10.30am

Family Christmas Day Service – Celebrate this special day with our popular Christmas morning family service.

Please join us, tea, coffee and minced pies will be served after each service.



Upcoming Speakers

29th Nov - Justin Thacker

6th Dec - Christingle Service

13th Dec - Christmas Play

20th Dec - 9 Lessons and carols

24th Dec 6pm - Angela Such

24th Dec 11.30pm - Jeremy Flynn

25th Dec - Angela Such

27th Dec – TBA

3rd Jan – TBA

10th Jan - Paul Tucker

17th Jan - Rev Tim Meachin

24th Jan - Susie Shiells

31st Jan - John Graham

7th Feb - Andy Guilder

14th Feb - Angela Such - Baptism Service

21st Feb - Rev Peter Blackband - Church Anniversary

Wednesday ladies bright and cheery

Wednesday ladies bright and cheery
Greeting each other and having a chat.
Sometimes, though, the day is dreary,
The news is grim and I am weary,
I stand at the front and watch for a while
And very soon you make me smile.

Wednesday ladies meet and greet,
Whether making the tea or saving a seat.
Like birds on a wire with news to tell,
There's me at the front....I'm in charge of the bell!

Notices, birthdays, a speaker or two
Our club has been busy all year through.
Wednesday ladies full of compassion
Your generous help doesn't go out of fashion!
The food bank and DENS, and IIMC,
I thank you so much for sponsoring me!

Macmillan, the hospice, your support won't subside,
On several occasions you brung and you buyed!
Your prayers for each other are a blessing, I know,
Helping the Kingdom of heaven to grow.

Moya Patel

*Wednesday Welcome meets every Wednesday in term time,
from*

*10.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. in the Martin Whittle Room, with
coffee/tea from 10.15 a.m. See Church notice boards for
programme and contact information.*

"The Institute for Indian Mother & Child"

Once again I am planning to go to Kolkata to visit the IIMC. This time I am happy to be accompanied by my Grandson and Granddaughter; who, with her university friend are required to make a documentary film as their 3rd year assignment for their Media course.

Amy chose IIMC as the subject as she has heard so much of it from grandma!

The girls will be focusing on the sponsorship scheme.

3000 children are currently sponsored by people from many different countries. The £10 per month donations covers the children's education, uniform, books, pens, a snack etc. Only one child from each family is sponsored-thus covering more families.

One educated child in a family can take care of the family.

The charity works around the area south of Kolkata, in West Bengal, in remote villages.

It has three main projects; the health care programme, the education of children, and the empowerment of women.

For further information, please see me, or go to our web site IIMC-UK.

GOD'S LOVE IS FOR EVERYONE.

Ivy Silk



Homelessness across the borough continues to be a major challenge for DENS and other agencies supporting people at a very stressful time in their lives. Consequently, the Elms, the Day Centre and Rent Aid are all under pressure. Having received a further three years of Big Lottery funding, the Day Centre has been busier than ever. During the financial year to March 2015 it had 4787 visitors, averaging 25 a day, and served 3880 meals. In addition to food, the service users had access to showers, laundry, computers, clothes, and practical help and advice, which could range from simple form filling to finding accommodation.

Since the Elms, the new 41-bed hostel on the Redbourn Road, opened in May 2015, the number of residents has built up so that it is regularly full. This purpose built facility provides more bed spaces, and a range of other features that the Night Shelter was unable to provide. These include a training kitchen, a vegetable garden, a self-service laundry and meeting and training rooms, as well as a large open lounge and recreational area. All of these were in use when the Elms was officially opened by the Duchess of Gloucester on 29th September.

Unfortunately, the size and scale of the hostel inevitably means that the homely intimacy of the old Night Shelter has been lost and a major challenge is to minimise the danger of it becoming an anonymous institution.

The Foodbank continues to be very much in demand. Since the beginning of the financial year 1677 people, the Day Centre and the Elms have received over 26 tonnes food. In addition to tinned and dry food, recipients coming to the Hub are also offered fresh food, cleaning products and toiletries. The fresh food comes from Ocado and Nandos who don't want surplus food to be wasted.

Stocks of food have been boosted significantly by harvest donations from schools churches and businesses, with nearly 9 tonnes of goods being received during September and October. In addition the biannual collection at Tesco stores, as part of the company's arrangement with the Trussell Trust, also produces a huge quantity of food through shoppers' generosity.

Again this year the Foodbank will be making up food hampers for 60 hard up households to be distributed on Christmas Eve. So, if you'd like to help either making up or delivering the hampers please let either Sharon Boyall or myself know.

Dave Greenwood

2015; A Reflection of World Events

Twelve Are Killed in Terrorist Attack at Newspaper in Paris

(Jan. 7): Two masked gunmen storm the office of Charlie Hebdo, a satirical weekly magazine, in Paris.

ISIS Militants Execute More Captives (Feb. 3): ISIS militants immolate Jordanian flight lieutenant pilot who they captured during U.S.-led attacks. In response, the Jordanian government executes two terrorists and vows revenge.

With Help From Iran, Iraq Begins Major Campaign Against

ISIS (Mar. 2): The Iraqi military, aided by Iranian-backed Shiite militias and Iranian troops and advisers, begins a major campaign against ISIS in Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown.

The Immigration Crisis Continues (Sept.): The immigration crisis in Europe intensifies throughout September. Migrants continue to flee war and conflict in Afghanistan, Syria, and regions of Northern Africa, pouring into the Balkans at a rate of about 3,000 a day.

China ends one child policy in October 2015

China and Taiwan Leaders Will Meet After Sixty-Six Years

(Nov. 4): A meeting is announced between the presidents of Taiwan and China. They will meet this weekend for the first time since 1949, when the Chinese revolution ended.

Germany opens borders to refugees (Sept)

Romans 12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

Youth Service

We are fortunate to have a strong, close-knit youth group at St Georges. A few months ago we had a meeting to discuss how we want to move forward in the coming academic year and concluded that we wished to be more involved in the church, and have our voice heard with the rest of the congregation. One way we wished to do this was by leading an entire service ourselves, including the worship, prayer and sermon.

We decided on a theme for the service; “Gifts of the Spirit” and then our youth leaders gave us lots of support in building the service. The date was set for the 22nd November, 2015, and then we met at Navigators every Thursday evening for several weeks to practice songs, write prayers and complete other important tasks relevant to the service running smoothly, many biscuits were eaten by all.

Throughout the process we discovered what a challenge running a service is, however we really enjoyed having the opportunity to contribute to the church in this way. Hopefully you will agree that the service ran smoothly, and that we conveyed our message about “Gifts of the Spirit” to you all in an effective, engaging manner. We’d love to run more services in the future (if you’ll have us back!) and can’t wait to get even more involved in the church in the coming year.

Jessica England

Looking ahead to Spring Harvest 2016

At St George's we are very lucky to have so many opportunities, such as Spring Harvest, which gives us the chance to become closer as a youth. When we were at spring harvest last year we were all able to learn more about God and each other. There were people who are regulars at church and those who come on the odd occasions. The youth all stood up for each other and became very close.

Also I feel like we need to mention our youth leaders, we wouldn't all be this close if it wasn't for them. They have all been there for us when we have needed them. They support us with learning about God but also with everyday situations. All the youth leaders are very supportive and have been one of the reasons we as a youth are so close.

Lois McIntyre



On Friday 16th October I hosted a coffee morning and bake sale to raise money as Tearfund's Big Bake Week.

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who came and to those who made cakes. We managed to raise together £126.12, which will go towards the No child Taken campaign. Trafficking is the fastest growing crime in the world. It shatters the lives of 1.2 million children every year, along with their families. But there are effective ways to stop this evil trade in its tracks. With our support, Christians are turning the tide of trafficking for labour around the world. To find out more about the campaign visit the Tearfund website.

Thank you again to all those who donated.

Amanda Hobbs



DIRECTORY

ST. GEORGE'S URC

Minister:	-
Secretary: Jeremy Flynn	Tel: 215268
Treasurer: Brian Hardy	Tel: 266337
Focus Magazine: Paul Boyall Jessica England	pboyall97@gmail.com jessicarachelengland@hotmail.com
Junior Church co-coordinator Sharon Boyall	Tel: 213538
Pilots - <i>Captain:</i> Bill Graham <i>Deckhands</i> (Years R-2) Bill Graham <i>Adventurers</i> (Years 3-6) Jim Wignall <i>Voyagers</i> (Years 7-9) & <i>Navigators</i> (years 10+) Bill Graham	07764 664596 / bill.graham@ntlworld.com 07813077096 / jimwignall@hotmail.com
Toddlers Group Carol Edgeworth	Tel: 392389
Wednesday Welcome Jo Taylor	Tel: 862754
Home Groups-	See separate list
Music Group Co-ordinator: - Music Director: Dan Hobbs	248427 or 07717201775
Prayer Co-ordinator Penny Crosswell	Tel: 211457
Prayer Chain Dan Hobbs	dan@thewadetribe.co.uk or Text on: 07717201775
Hall Bookings Dave Greenwood	Tel: 258757 dgreenwood@onetel.com
Transport Co-ordinator Denise Chennells	Tel: 246277
Table Tennis Leaders Dennis Chang & Gill Griffin	Tel: 243267 (Gill Griffin)
Women's Ministry Angela Such	Tel: 07941 534123